

I am writing in support of H.B. 5399 *AN ACT CONCERNING THE EUTHANIZING OF ANIMALS BY THE CONNECTICUT HUMANE SOCIETY*.

I am a former employee of the Connecticut Humane Society. I was not personally involved in the euthanizing of animals, but during the several years that I worked there I had many conversations with coworkers who did. There are caring and competent workers who have been trained to perform euthanasia and do so in a compassionate manner. However, there are also those who are not so well trained and there have been instances where animals were made to suffer because the individuals involved in their euthanasia did not act with the care and professionalism that would have been provided by a licensed veterinarian.

I also saw much inconsistency in the process by which the decision was made to euthanize an animal, especially for reasons of behavior or temperament. The criteria in behavior cases is more of a gray area than criteria for medical illness or injury. The number of animals who were put to sleep and the reasons given by managers charged with the decision varies widely based on the person who holds the position. Euthanasia for medical reasons, when the decision is made by a veterinarian, was more stable and the reasons are more clearly stated. I believe that having all euthanasia performed by licensed veterinarians would more likely cause educated and professional decisions to be made.

From what I understand, the law that allows any employee of the Connecticut Humane Society to euthanize an animal has been in place for decades. When it was enacted the Society put to sleep thousands of animals per year. Thankfully, in current times the number is only a small fraction of that. I do not believe it is an undue financial burden for the wealthiest animal welfare organization in our state to conform to the euthanasia standards of all other individuals, animal control departments and animal rescue organizations. This is a matter of life and death for these animals, and they deserve the same professional treatment as all of our state's other precious animals.

Thank you for your time and consideration.